

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Applicant	:	Plush, et al.)	Group Art Unit Unknown
)	
Appl. No.	:	Unknown)	
)	
Filed	:	Herewith)	
)	
For	:	METHOD AND APPARATUS)	
		FOR GENERATING BILLING)	
		DATA IN A)	
		TELECOMMUNICATIONS)	
		SYSTEM)	
)	
Examiner	:	Unknown)	

PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT

Assistant Commissioner for Patents
Washington, D.C. 20231

Dear Sir:

Prior to examination of the above-captioned application, please amend the application as follows:

IN THE SPECIFICATION:

Please amend the specification as follows:

On page 1, after the title, please insert -- This application is a continuation of prior application 09/721,784, filed on November 22, 2000, which is a continuation of U.S. Patent 6,173,171, issued on January 9, 2001. --

On page 1, between lines 5 and 6, please insert -- Background of the Invention --.

On page 2, between lines 14 and 15, please insert -- Summary of Certain Inventive Aspects --.

On page 6, before line 1, please insert -- Brief Description of the Drawings --.

On page 6, between lines 13 and 14, please insert -- Detailed Description of Certain Inventive Embodiments --.

On page 19, please replace "CLAIMS" with -- WHAT IS CLAIMED IS --.

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IN THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel Claims 1-26 without prejudice.

Please add Claims 27-30 as follows:

27. (New) A method of generating billing data for subscribers in a telecommunications system by administering a shared usage plan, comprising:

registering a plurality of groups of subscribers, each of said groups comprising a plurality of subscribers for which a single shared usage plan is held;

assigning a shared usage allocation of an original magnitude to each of said groups that is available for usage by the group at a beginning of a predetermined period, wherein the original magnitude of each shared usage plan is predetermined in accordance with the shared usage plan held by a group;

maintaining a record for each group of subscribers, wherein the record includes subscriber identification data for each subscriber and the shared usage allocation assigned to the group;

determining if a subscriber of one of said groups uses a telecommunications service;

accessing, upon determining that the subscriber uses the telecommunications service, the record for the group of which the subscriber is a member; and

analyzing call data so as to apply one of a number of different predetermined call charging tariffs to a call made by the subscriber, in dependence of the group of which the subscriber is a member, in order to generate charging data for said call and to allow a common charging tariff to be applied for each subscriber in a group for which a combined subscription is held when said shared usage allocation has been exhausted.

28. (New) The method of Claim 27, wherein the original magnitude is a predetermined number of minutes.

29. (New) The method of Claim 27, wherein the original magnitude is a predetermined amount of money.

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30. (New) A method of generating billing data for subscribers in a telecommunications system, said method comprising:

storing subscriber records for a plurality of groups of subscribers, each of said groups comprising a plurality of subscribers for which a combined subscription is held, said groups comprising different numbers of subscribers;

relating a shared usage allocation of an original magnitude to each of said groups at the start of each of a series of predetermined periods, the original magnitude of each of said shared usage allocation being predetermined in accordance with the subscription type held for each group, respectively; and

analyzing call data so as to apply one of a number of different predetermined call charging tariffs to a call made by a subscriber in one of said groups, in dependence of the group of which the subscriber is a member, in order to generate charging data for said call and to allow a common charging tariff to be applied for each subscriber in a group for which a combined subscription is held when said shared usage allocation has been exhausted.

REMARKS

In view of the foregoing amendments, Claims 27-30 are pending in this application. If the Examiner has any questions regarding the foregoing amendments, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned by telephone.

Respectfully submitted,

KNOBBE, MARTENS, OLSON & BEAR, LLP

Dated: 12/6/01

By: _____

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